



**The American Jewish
Committee**

OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

1156 Fifteenth Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005 202-785-4200 Fax 202-659-9896 E-mail: ogia@ajc.org

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Dear Representative:

The American Jewish Committee, the nation's premier human relations organization, with over 110,000 members and supporters and 32 offices nationwide, strongly urges you to vote against H.Con.Res.239 when it comes up for a vote on the suspension calendar. Far from providing comfort to the citizens of our land, so severely wounded in the wake of September 11th, this initiative disrespects the Constitution and promotes divisiveness.

H.Con.Res.239, even though a resolution without binding effect, would send a message of congressional support for mandatory school prayer, in defiance of our cherished protections of religious liberty. Students have an individual right to pray in school and, no doubt, many prayers are being said in school and out in the wake of the recent horrendous attacks on the United States. But mandatory classroom prayer – in which students are not only told when to pray but, incredibly, what to pray for – would violate the long-standing constitutional principle that it is up to parents and clergy, not the Government, to instruct children as to the appropriate time, place and content of prayer.

We strongly urge you to vote against H.Con.Res.239.

Sincerely,

Richard T. Foltin
Legislative Director and Counsel